

What is claimed is:

1. A computer-implemented system that matches buyers with sellers in  
5 order to sell used equipment, comprising:

an used equipment matching database engine that receives selling  
criteria data from a seller;

an used equipment brokering database connected to the used  
equipment matching database engine that stores the selling criteria data;

10 said used equipment matching database engine receiving bid  
criteria data from a buyer, wherein the bid criteria data does not satisfy the selling  
criteria data; and

a value adding module connected to the equipment matching  
engine that determines and adds value from a third party so as to substantially  
15 make the bid criteria data satisfy the selling criteria data.

2. The computer-implemented system of claim 1 wherein the value added  
by the value adding module is not to the financial detriment of the seller of the used  
equipment.

20 3. The computer-implemented system of claim 2 wherein the selling  
criteria data includes an asking price at which the seller will sell the used equipment,  
wherein the value added by the value adding module does not affect the asking price of  
the seller.

4. The computer-implemented system of claim 2 wherein the third party is a broker who incurs an immediate financial detriment due to the value added by the value adding module.

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5. The computer-implemented system of claim 4 wherein the value added by the value adding module is cash provided by the third party.

6. The computer-implemented system of claim 4 wherein the third party is a manufacturer of the used equipment.

7. The computer-implemented system of claim 4 wherein the third party is a manufacturer of equipment, wherein the manufacturer provides the value to sell the used equipment despite the used equipment having been manufactured by a company other than the manufacturer.

8. The computer-implemented system of claim 7 wherein the company that manufactured the used equipment is a competitor of the manufacturer that is providing the value to sell the used equipment.

9. The computer-implemented system of claim 4 wherein the third party is a dealer of the used equipment.

10. The computer-implemented system of claim 1 wherein a dealer of equipment and a manufacturer of equipment both contribute resources to provide approximately the value determined by the value adding module.

5 11. The computer-implemented system of claim 1 wherein the value adding module examines a plurality of value adding items to determine which of the value adding items are to be used as the value to be added by the third party, wherein the value adding module determines that at least two of the value adding items are to be used as the value to be added by the third party.

10 12. The computer-implemented system of claim 1 wherein the third party adjusts the value determined by the value adding module.

15 13. The computer-implemented system of claim 1 wherein the value adding module examines a plurality of value adding items to determine which of the value adding items are to be used as the value to be added by the third party.

20 14. The computer-implemented system of claim 13 wherein the value adding module examines historical data associated with the used equipment to determine which of the value adding items are to be used as the value to be added by the third party.

15. The computer-implemented system of claim 14 wherein the historical data includes the historical servicing data associated with the used equipment.

16. The computer-implemented system of claim 15 wherein future servicing data associated with the used equipment is used to determine which of the value adding items are to be used as the value to be added by the third party.

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17. The computer-implemented system of claim 1 wherein the value adding module examines a plurality of value adding items to determine which of the value adding items are to be used as the value to be added by the third party, wherein the determined value is an optimal value that provides the least financial detriment to the third party.

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18. The computer-implemented system of claim 17 wherein the plurality of value adding items are items selected from the group consisting of equipment inspection, equipment repair, equipment certification, extended warranty offer, equipment upgrade, routine maintenance, financial benefits, shipping benefits, and combinations thereof.

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19. The computer-implemented system of claim 17 wherein the value adding module retrieves from the used equipment brokering database data related to the used equipment in order to determine which of the value adding items are to be used as the value to be added by the third party.

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20. The computer-implemented system of claim 19 wherein the value adding module retrieves data related to the used equipment from computers located remotely on a network, said value adding module using the retrieved data to determine which of the value adding items are to be used as the value to be added by the third party.

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21. The computer-implemented system of claim 20 wherein the network is an Internet network.

22. The computer-implemented system of claim 20 wherein the retrieved data from the remotely located computers are data selected from the group consisting of warranty data from a manufacturer, financial data from a financial institution, transportation data from a shipping company, and combinations thereof.

23. The computer-implemented system of claim 20 wherein computers of different shipping companies transmit shipping data for use by the value adding module, wherein the value adding module determines which shipping company to use based upon the transmitted shipping data.

24. The computer-implemented system of claim 20 wherein computers of different financial companies transmit financial data for use by the value adding module, wherein the value adding module determines which financial company to use to finance the selling of the used equipment based upon the transmitted financial data.

25. The computer-implemented system of claim 1 wherein the selling criteria data includes an asking price at which the seller will sell the used equipment, wherein the asking price provided by the seller specifies that a market value is to be used as the asking price.

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26. The computer-implemented system of claim 25 wherein the market value is a blue book price for the used equipment.

27. The computer-implemented system of claim 25 wherein the value adding module receives market value data from a computer located remotely on a network.

28. The computer-implemented system of claim 27 wherein the network is an Internet network.

29. The computer-implemented system of claim 25 wherein at a first date the value adding module uses as the asking price a first market value obtained from a computer located remotely on a network, wherein the first market value is indicative of market value of the used equipment on the first date,

wherein at a second date the value adding module retrieves from a computer located remotely on the network a second market value for use as the asking price, wherein the second market value is indicative of market value of the used equipment on the second date.

30. The computer-implemented system of claim 29 wherein the network is an Internet network.

5           31. The computer-implemented system of claim 25 wherein the value adding module receives market value data from a plurality of computers located remotely on a network, wherein the value adding module performs a statistical function to determine a single market value for use as the asking price.

10           32. The computer-implemented system of claim 31 wherein the statistical function is an averaging function.

15           33. The computer-implemented system of claim 1 wherein the selling criteria data are data selected from the group consisting of equipment make, model, years, hours, condition, optional equipment, features, size, location, capacity, digital photo, warranty data, and combinations thereof.

20           34. The computer-implemented system of claim 1 wherein the buyer provides search criteria to locate suitable used equipment within the used equipment brokering database.

          35. The computer-implemented system of claim 34 wherein the buyer's search criteria includes criteria selected from the group consisting of equipment make

criteria, model criteria, years criteria, hours criteria, condition criteria, optional equipment criteria, features criteria, size criteria, location criteria, capacity criteria, warranty data criteria, search criteria deviations, and combinations thereof.

5                   36. The computer-implemented system of claim 35 wherein the used equipment matching database engine provides to the buyer used equipment data entries from the used equipment brokering database that exactly match the buyer's search criteria.

10                   37. The computer-implemented system of claim 36 wherein the selling criteria data includes an asking price at which the seller will sell the used equipment, wherein the used equipment matching database engine provides to the buyer used equipment data entries from the used equipment brokering database that do not exactly match the buyer's search criteria, but that substantially satisfies the asking price due to the  
15 added value.

20                   38. The computer-implemented system of claim 1 wherein the used equipment brokering database includes data structures selected from the group consisting of equipment information data structure means, value adding data structure means, pricing information data structure means, service information data structure means, and combinations thereof.



39. The computer-implemented system of claim 1 wherein the seller is a dealer of used equipment.

40. The computer-implemented system of claim 1 wherein a dealer of used equipment transmits to the used equipment matching database engine additional information regarding the used equipment.

41. The computer-implemented system of claim 40 wherein the dealer provides the additional information when the used equipment is being serviced by the dealer for the seller.

42. The computer-implemented system of claim 41 wherein the additional information contains what servicing is being performed by the dealer to the used equipment.

43. The computer-implemented system of claim 1 wherein a wireless communication system is used to transmit operational data about the used equipment for storage in the used equipment brokering database.

44. The computer-implemented system of claim 43 wherein the operational data is transmitted after the used equipment has been operational for a predetermined time.

45. The computer-implemented system of claim 1 wherein an Internet network provides data communication among the buyer, the seller, and the used equipment matching database engine.

5 46. The computer-implemented system of claim 1 wherein the used equipment matching database engine generates an agreement that is used to implement the added value.

10 47. The computer-implemented system of claim 46 wherein the agreement is a shipping agreement.

48. The computer-implemented system of claim 46 wherein the agreement is a financial arrangement agreement.

49. A computer-implemented method for matching buyers with sellers over a network in order to sell used equipment, comprising the steps of:

(a) receiving over the network from a seller used equipment selling data which includes an asking price for selling the seller's used equipment;

5 (b) storing the used equipment selling data in an used equipment brokering database, said used equipment brokering database including at least one data entry for each piece of used equipment;

(c) receiving over the network from a buyer used equipment search criteria;

10 (d) receiving over the network from the buyer a bid price for used equipment;

(e) using a value adding software module to determine at least one equipment data entry whose associated asking price differs from the buyer's bid price;

15 (f) determining value to be added to the used equipment data entry determined in step (e) such that the bid price substantially satisfies the seller's asking price; and

(g) providing to the buyer as a purchase option the used equipment data entry for which the value was determined in step (f).